

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 168

Introduced by Assembly Members V. Manuel Pérez and Alejo

August 4, 2014

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 168—Relative to Native Americans: NFL Football: Change the Mascot.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

ACR 168, as introduced, V. Manuel Pérez. Native Americans.

This measure would urge the National Football League (NFL) to join with the Legislature and numerous organizations in calling for a name change for the Washington, D.C. NFL team, and calls upon the owners of NFL teams based in California to urge the owner of the Washington, D.C. NFL team and the NFL Commissioner to change the team mascot.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, The name used by the Washington, D.C. National
- 2 Football League (NFL) team is widely recognized as a racial slur
- 3 and promotes discrimination against Native Americans; and
- 4 WHEREAS, “Indian” sports brands used by professional teams
- 5 were born in an era when racism and bigotry were deemed
- 6 acceptable. These brands, which have grown to become
- 7 multi-million dollar franchises, were established at a time when
- 8 the practice of employing racial epithets and slurs as marketing
- 9 slogans was commonly used to capitalize on cultural superiority
- 10 and racial tensions; and
- 11 WHEREAS, 50 United States Senators joined together to send
- 12 a letter to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell demanding that, “It’s

1 time for the NFL to endorse a name change for the Washington,
2 D.C. football team”; and

3 WHEREAS, Dozens of groups representing millions of
4 Americans have asked NFL players to take a stand against the
5 Washington, D.C. NFL team’s use of the derogatory R-word; and

6 WHEREAS, On June 18, 2014, the United States Patent and
7 Trademark Office (USPTO) canceled the Washington, D.C. NFL
8 team’s federal trademark registration of the name “Washington
9 R_____.” The USPTO ruling deemed the term “disparaging to
10 Native Americans,” and canceled the trademark status of the name.
11 Unless the Washington, D.C. NFL team successfully appeals, the
12 USPTO ruling would mean that the team has no legal ownership
13 over the term; and

14 WHEREAS, Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle,
15 city councils, top sports icons, civil rights groups, religious groups,
16 prominent journalists, and President Obama have all spoken out
17 against the team’s continued use of the epithet; now, therefore, be
18 it

19 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
20 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature stands with the 109
21 federally recognized Indian tribes in California, which has the
22 highest Native American population in the country with over
23 700,000 people who identify themselves as Native American, and
24 urges the National Football League (NFL) to join Indian Country,
25 The National Congress of American Indians, and other
26 organizations, which represent more than 2 million Native
27 Americans across the country and more than 300 tribes in the
28 United States, in calling for a name change for the Washington,
29 D.C. NFL team; and be it further

30 *Resolved*, That the Legislature calls upon the owners of NFL
31 teams based in California to urge the Washington, D.C. NFL team
32 owner Dan Snyder and NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell to
33 adhere to the wishes of the millions of people who have joined
34 Indian Country in urging that they change the team mascot; and
35 be it further

36 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
37 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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